

REMARKS

Claims 19 and 20 are pending in this application, with Claims 1-18 cancelled without prejudice to the filing of a divisional or continuing application, and Claims 19 and 20 amended. The Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and review of the application in view of the amendments and the following remarks. By the foregoing amendments, no new matter has been added.

The Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the Examiner's consideration of a Proposed Claim Amendment, and the Examiner conducting a telephonic interview with Applicant's counsel to discuss the same.

In the Office Action mailed September 15, 2003, the Examiner rejected Claims 10-18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Leach et al. in view of Aipperspach et al., and rejected Claims 19 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite and for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as his invention. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

While the Applicant disagrees with the Examiner's characterization of the Leach et al. and Aipperspach et al. patents, or more particularly the disclosures made thereby, Applicant has cancelled Claims 10-18, without prejudice, in order to expedite allowance of the present application. It should be appreciated, however, that the Applicant reserves the right to further prosecute these claims and/or the subject matter provided therein in a continuing application.

With respect to Claims 19 and 20, Applicant has amended these claims in accordance with Applicant's Proposed Claim Amendment, which was faxed to the Examiner on December 30, 2003. It is submitted that these amendments render Claims 19 and 20 sufficiently definite and place them in condition for allowance. Therefore, the rejections of Claims 19 and 20 should be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, the Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 19 and 20 are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested, and a timely Notice of Allowability is solicited. To the extent it would be helpful to placing this application in condition for allowance, the Applicant encourages the Examiner to contact the undersigned counsel and conduct a telephonic interview.

Applicant petitions the Commissioner for a two-month extension of time, extending to February 16, 2004 (the first business day following February 15, 2004), the period for response to the Office Action dated September 15, 2004. Our check in the amount of \$420 is enclosed for the two-month extension of time, pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.17(a)(2). The Commissioner is authorized to charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-0639.

Respectfully submitted,



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